



Office of the Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor's new assistant will promote City Plan efforts

SOUTH BEND -- Mayor Stephen J. Luecke has named a former newspaper reporter and communications professional to his staff in response to priorities established through City Plan, South Bend's 20-year master plan.

Tom Price, an award-winning reporter with *The Elkhart Truth* and the director of communications and marketing efforts for a national Mennonite Church nonprofit, began work Feb. 5 as Assistant to the Mayor with special responsibilities for communication and promotion of the South Bend community.

Price, 45, succeeds Jack Reed as an assistant to the mayor, but the responsibilities of the role for Price have changed significantly in the wake of City Plan.

"City Plan places strong emphasis on the need to promote community assets and city programs; develop marketing materials and strategies; and form partnerships with institutions, community organizations and businesses," Luecke said.

Luecke said the creation of this new assignment and Price's appointment represents an essential follow-up to the city's reorientation of its Community and Economic Development department.

"These new efforts will have a positive impact on economic development, on neighborhoods, and on arts and culture," the mayor said. "They will help us to achieve City Plan goals in building South Bend as a vibrant, caring city."

Price has been a resident of South Bend's near northwest neighborhood since 1991, although he has worked in Elkhart since 1986.

“I’ve witnessed dramatic changes in South Bend in the time I’ve lived here, and I’m excited about joining a team dedicated to advancing the interests of the whole community,” Price said. “With new developments already under way and more in the works, South Bend will become known as a city that provides new economic opportunities, enriching quality of life and attractive neighborhoods.”

A Chicago native, Price is a 1983 graduate of Judson College in Elgin, Ill., where he received a bachelor’s degree in communications. After working as a reporter/photographer for a weekly newspaper in Chicago’s southwest suburbs, Price received a master’s degree in journalism from Indiana University in Bloomington, where he was editor in chief of the *Indiana Daily Student*.

Price joined *The Elkhart Truth* as a reporter in 1986, covering a variety of beats including city government, the state legislature, politics, the environment, health and human affairs, and religion, receiving several statewide honors for his writing. He began significant religion coverage for the newspaper, which at the time was the smallest circulation newspaper in the country to devote full-time resources to religion coverage. Price received four national honors for his work, including in 1989 being named the Religion Writer of the Year for newspapers under 50,000 circulation by the Religion Newswriters Association.

In 1995, he became director of communications for what was then Mennonite Board of Missions, the binational mission and service agency of the Mennonite Church, headquartered in Elkhart. Through his leadership in communication, the organization reversed a decline in contributions that had resulted, in part, from a decline in awareness. Price also visited 18 countries to report on mission activities.

When the former Mennonite Church merged in 2001 with the General Conference Mennonite Church to form the 110,000-member Mennonite Church USA, Price was named the director of communications for the U.S.-based Mennonite Mission Network, itself resulting from the consolidation of three mission organizations. In that capacity, Price led a communications staff of 17 for the \$10.8-million non-profit.

Since 2003, Price has served as the first director of marketing for Mennonite Mission Network. His responsibilities included research, direct-mail fund-raising, and market planning and consultation.

Price has taken additional coursework at the University of Notre Dame and in 1993 was selected among 29 journalists nationwide to participate in a Knight Fellowship in Specialized Journalism at the University of Maryland at College Park. He is a member of the American Marketing Association’s Michiana chapter and a past vice president of the Society for Professional Journalists, Michiana chapter.

He and his wife, Ann, have two daughters, Katherine and Emily, who are students in the South Bend Community School Corp. They are members of Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend.